

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code _____

Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of 5

Resource Name or #: (assigned by recorder) Vallejo Adobe

P1. Other Identifier: Vallejo Adobe City of Fremont Map No. 566-C-392 Ref. No. 81
P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary)
a. County Alameda
b. USGS 7.5' Quad Niles Date 1980 T 4S R 1W; - 1/4 of - 1/4 of Sec. _____; Mount Diablo B.M.
c. Address 36501 Niles Boulevard City Fremont Zip 94536
d. UTM: Zone 10; _____ mE / _____ mN
e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc.)

APN 507-0068-004-00
Planning Area Niles

P3a. Description (Describe the resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting & boundaries):

Erected around 1842, the Vallejo Adobe has been encompassed by the grounds of the California Nursery since 1884. The 20.1-acre property—the remnant of the original nursery, which covered over 450 acres—is now owned by the City of Fremont, which operates the facility as a historic park. The grounds occupy a generally rectangular site with an ell at the northwest corner, facing north to Niles Boulevard. Modern subdivisions adjoin at the sides and rear. Roughly half of the property (11.27 acres) is under lease to two nurseries. The grounds retain a wide variety of historic trees and a number of older structures. The Vallejo Adobe (including the visitors' parking lot and restrooms) occupies a rectangular site adjoining the main access road into the grounds. The attached map shows the nursery layout and locations of the buildings. (For a description and history of the overall site, see the DPR 523 form for the California Nursery.)

The adobe is set within a rectangular, landscaped plot surrounded by a modern iron-bar fence. The garden includes stone-lined walkways, shrubs, a variety of trees, and a lawn. The adobe is a one-story structure with a rectangular plan measuring 25 feet by 44 feet 5 inches. The adobe walls are 2 feet 11 inches thick, with an uneven, bumpy surface sheathed in white-painted plaster. The gable roof is clad in terra-cotta Spanish tile with a round brick chimney at one corner. The wide eaves have exposed beams and rafters. Three concrete buttresses with slanting profiles abut the building's south wall. There are four multi-light wood-sash windows: two on the north, one on the south, and one on the west. Plank doors with iron hinges are set into the south and west sides of the building. The interior includes a concrete and tile floor, exposed truss ceiling, and rounded corner fireplace.

(see continuation sheet)

P3b. Resource Attributes: HP44--Adobe building/structure

P4. Resources present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other



P5b. Description of Photo:
View from E.

P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:
☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
ca. 1842

P7. Owner and Address
City of Fremont

Fremont, CA 94536

P8. Recorded by:
(Name, affiliation, and address)

Woodruff Minor and Jill Singleton
Basin Research Associates, Inc.
1933 Davis St., Suite 210
San Leandro, CA 94577

P9. Date Recorded June 2002

P10. Survey Type: (Describe)
Intensive

P11. Report Citation (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none"):

City of Fremont, Historic Resources Inventory, Phase II by Basin Research Associates (Data on file - City of Fremont Development and Environmental Services Department).

Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record ☐ Artifact Record
☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List) _____

B1. Historic Name: Vallejo Adobe
B2. Common Name: Vallejo Adobe
B3. Original Use: Residence/Storehouse/Granary? B4. Present Use: Park/Event Venue
B5. Architectural Style: Adobe
B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

The building was built in ca. 1842. The Vallejo Adobe was extensively altered in a major reconstruction in 1931, and further rehabilitated in 1999–2000. With the exception of the four adobe walls (which have been patched in places) and two roof beams, the structure has been totally rebuilt. It originally had one door, no windows, and a dirt floor. New construction includes the buttresses on the south wall; most of the roof framing and all of the roof tiling; the chimney; the south doorway, both wood doors, and all four windows; adobe infill and exterior plaster; and all interior work. The setting has been altered by the addition of a parking lot with planting strips (probably dating from the 1930s) and a modern restroom building with white-painted stucco walls and red-tile gable roof resembling the adobe.

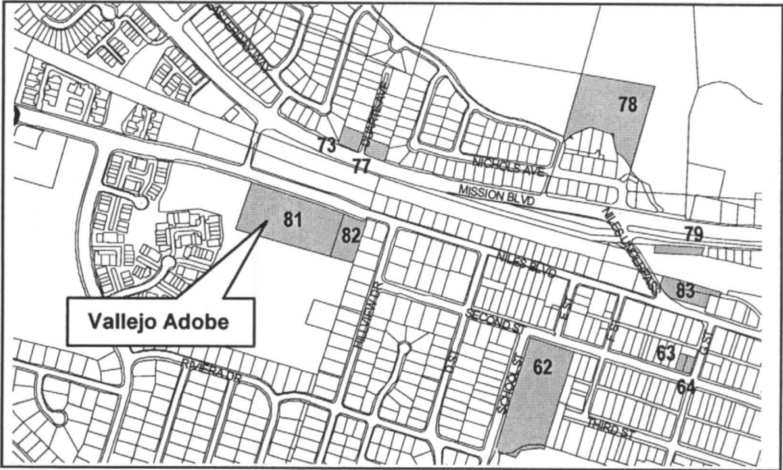
B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____
B8. Related Features: _____
B9a. Architect: Unknown B9b. Builder: Unknown
B10. Significance: Theme Residential Architecture Area Niles District, Fremont
Period of Significance 1842–present Property Type House Applicable Criteria C/3
(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

Following Mexican independence in the 1820s, the California missions were closed and their lands disposed of as private ranchos. Between 1836 and 1846, four ranchos were carved out of former Mission San Jose property in the area that became Washington Township—Rancho Agua Caliente (1836), Rancho Arroyo de la Alameda (1842), Rancho Potrero de Los Cerritos (1844), and Rancho Ex-Mission San Jose Lands (1846). On June 1, 1842, Jose de Jesus Vallejo petitioned Governor Alvarado for Rancho Arroyo de la Alameda, receiving title to the property on August 8, 1842. The rancho spread west from Alameda Creek between the hills and the bay, covering an area of four square leagues, or 17,705 acres. The Niles district of Fremont and much of Union City are located within the historic boundaries of the rancho. Of the several small adobes that once formed part of the rancho, the subject property is the only one to survive.

(see continuation sheet)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)
B12. References:
(see continuation sheet)
B13. Remarks:
B14. Evaluator Ward Hill, Woodruff Minor and Michael Corbett, Architectural Historians
Date of Evaluation: Dec. 2001

(This space reserved for official comments)



P3a. continued

The Vallejo Adobe was extensively altered in a major reconstruction in 1931, and further rehabilitated in 1999–2000. With the exception of the four adobe walls (which have been patched in places) and two roof beams, the structure has been totally rebuilt. It originally had one door, no windows, and a dirt floor. New construction includes the buttresses on the south wall; most of the roof framing and all of the roof tiling; the chimney; the south doorway, both wood doors, and all four windows; adobe infill and exterior plaster; and all interior work. The setting has been altered by the addition of a parking lot with planting strips (probably dating from the 1930s) and a modern restroom building with white-painted stucco walls and red-tile gable roof resembling the adobe.

B10. Continued

Jose de Jesus Vallejo (1797–1882) was born into a distinguished colonial family in Monterey. One of his brothers, General Mariano Vallejo, was the general in command of Alta California during the Mexican War. In 1819, J. J. Vallejo married Soleda Sanchez de Ortega, who bore him seven children. He went on to pursue a career of military and civil service. Between 1836 and 1840, Vallejo was the administrator of the old Mission San Jose, overseeing the transition of mission lands to private ownership. In 1837, he also served as the military commander of San Jose. Following statehood, in 1850, Vallejo settled with his family in the town of Mission San Jose, serving as its first postmaster. In 1859, he was considered the richest man in Alameda County, with an estate valued at \$190,000—derived primarily from his rancho property, which included a large gristmill on Alameda Creek. The mill lent its name to the town of Vallejo Mills (renamed Niles after the arrival of the railroad, in 1869). In the relatively few years it remained in operation, Rancho Arroyo de la Alameda was a successful enterprise. Vallejo cultivated wheat and potatoes, among other crops, and his livestock included thousands of horses, cattle, oxen, and pigs. His horses were prized as cavalry mounts; his cattle provided tanned hides for the leather trade.

When Vallejo was granted the rancho in August 1842, he was required by law to build a house and inhabit it within one year. Although several small adobes were built on the property, it is not known which was built first. It is unlikely that Vallejo ever lived in any of them; for many years, he and his family resided in a two-story adobe mansion in Mission San Jose (situated at the southwest corner of present-day Mission and Washington Boulevards, across from the mission church, this large adobe was razed prior to 1900). The modest rancho adobes, by contrast, would likely have served as living quarters for workers such as vaqueros or possibly as storehouses or granaries. The existing adobe could have functioned in any of these ways. One source states that it was a granary for the gristmill.

During the first wave of intensive settlement in the area in the 1850s, J. J. Vallejo managed to retain title to his rancho property. He sold about a third of his land, mostly choice tracts of alluvial farmland around Alvarado, before legal debts forced him to mortgage what remained (around 11,000 acres, including the subject property) to a San Francisco merchant and real estate speculator named Jonas G. Clark. Clark foreclosed on the loan in July 1862, receiving title to the rancho's hill section and adjacent flatland in February 1863 (this conveyance was "ratified and confirmed" in a second deed issued in March 1866). According to some sources, the adobe then served as a squatter's residence. In November 1884, Clark sold 463.38 acres of the land (including the adobe) to John Rock, who established the California Nursery on the site. During these years the adobe, much altered, served primarily as a storehouse. In 1931, under the ownership of George C. Roeding, Jr., the adobe was rebuilt to serve as a reception room, guest cottage, and logo for the California Nursery. Architect Frederick Reimers provided the plans for the reconstruction.

Following the nursery's bankruptcy, in the late 1960s, a 20.1-acre remnant of the grounds, including the adobe, was acquired in the early 1970s by the City of Fremont. Since that time, the grounds have been leased and the adobe has served as a venue for weddings and public events. A major rehabilitation of the building was undertaken in 1999–2000. It is one of three adobes left standing in Fremont (the other two are the remnant of the mission in Mission San Jose and the Higuera Adobe in the Warm Springs district). In 1970, the Vallejo Adobe was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Evaluation

Because of its architectural and historical importance, the Vallejo Adobe has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As such, the building is automatically eligible for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources.

B12. References

1. General Sources

Basin Research Associates and Ward Hill. *City of Fremont, Washington Township: Niles Historic Context*, 1998.

Country Club of Washington Township Research Committee. *History of Washington Township*. Second Edition. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1950.

Duval, Charlene. *Historical Background of the Vallejo Adobe on the Former California Nursery Property, City of Fremont, County of Alameda*, 30 May 1997. Prepared for Gil Sanchez, FAIA, as part of the *Condition Assessment and Preliminary Rehabilitation Study for the Vallejo Adobe*, June 1997.

Fremont Museum of Local History. California Nursery Company Collection and Robert D. Fisher Collection.

Sanchez, Gil, FAIA, and Daryl Allen. *Condition Assessment and Preliminary Rehabilitation Study for the Vallejo Adobe*. Prepared for the City of Fremont Development and Environmental Services Department, June 1997.

Sandoval, John S. *The History of Washington Township*. Castro Valley: John S. Sandoval, 1985.

Singleton, Jill. Typed manuscripts re history of California Nursery Company and Vallejo Adobe.

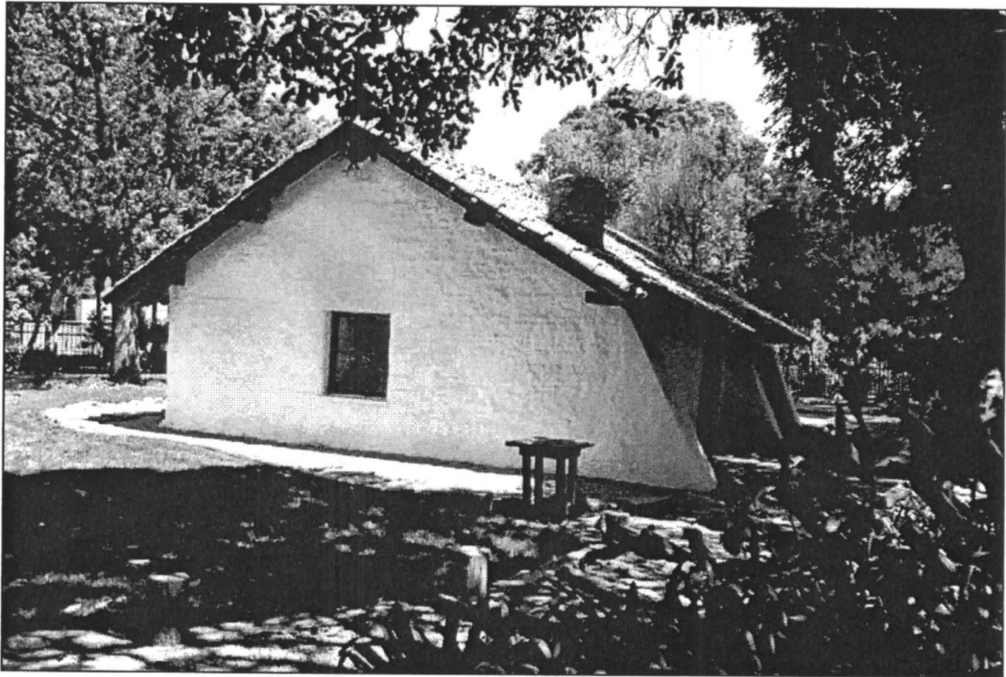
2. Public Records and Maps

Alameda County Assessor.
Ledger Book for Washington Township (1893).
Map Books for Washington Township (1900–02, 1929)

Alameda County Recorder. Deeds.
Book T, page 407 (Vallejo to Clark), 7 March 1866.
Book 278, page 204 (Clark to Rock), 10 November 1884.
Book 707, page 168 (Rock to Landers), 17 August 1899.

Alameda County Recorder. Official Records.
Map of a Part of the Rancho Arroyo de la Alameda, Showing Tracts Recently Sold by J. G. Clark. Surveyed by W. F. Boardman. Filed 24 November 1884.

P5a. Photo, continued



View from W.

